

AN ELECTRIC RAILWAY FOR LONDON.—London is to have its electric railway. This is the outcome of a meeting which has just been held of the shareholders of the London and Southwark Subway Company. The directors are authorized to commence at once the necessary arrangements for the laying of the line by electricity, and it is hoped that a considerable portion will be completed by the end of the year. This subway is, therefore, in a fair way to become a metropolitan institution; and if successfully started, will doubtless prepare the way for similar schemes in other portions of the town. It will extend, when complete, from the City side of London Bridge to the Swan at Stockwell, with several intermediate stations. It was the original intention of the Company to work their line on the American endless cable principle, but the inquiry into the electric railway will be at once a better and more economical undertaking, and the two or three shareholders who held obstinately to the original plan were completely outvoted.—*Court Journal.*

VILLAGE LIFE IN CHINA.

The architecture of the Chinese has been comprehensively and perhaps not inaccurately described, as consisting essentially of two sticks placed upright, with a third laid across them at the top. The shape of Chinese roofs, however, they may vary among themselves, suggests the tent as the prime model, though, as Dr Williams and others have remarked, there is no proof of any connection between the Chinese roof and the tent. Owing to the national reluctance to erect lofty buildings, almost all Chinese cities present an appearance of monotonous uniformity, greatly in contrast with the view to be had in other lands of large cities. If Chinese cities are thus uninviting in their aspect, the traveller must not expect to find anything in the country village to gratify his aesthetic sense. There is no such word as 'aesthetic' in Chinese, and if there were, it is not one in which villagers would take any interest. The houses are generally placed on the north end of the space reserved as a courtyard, so as to face the south, and if additional structures are needed, they are placed at right angles to the main one, so as to face east and west. If the premises are large, the front wall of the yard is formed by another house, similar to the one in the rear, and like it having side buildings. However numerous or however wealthy the family, this is the normal type of a dwelling. In cities, this type is greatly modified by the introduction of a central space at disposal, but in the country it rules supreme. The frame-work of the house is supported by posts, no matter what the material of which the house is built, and this material is regarded as merely a filling. The numerative of Chinese houses is in a word, a room, or a division, signifying not a room, but rather such a part of a dwelling as can conveniently be embraced in timbers of one length. As these timbers are seldom very large or very long, as used in private houses, one division of a house will not often exceed ten or twelve feet in length, by a little less width from front to back. An ordinary house will comprise three or four divisions, though there may be but one partition, forming one double and one single room. There is no ceiling, and the roof which is usually lofty, is in full view. All the doors are made with heavy leaves, projections above and below, like pines, serving as the hinges. There is a movable door-sill, out of which a small hole is often cut, to admit of entrance and exit for the dogs and cats. Such doors cannot be tightly closed, and the workmanship and the unequal shrinkage of the wood always render it easy to see through the many cracks.

Almost all parts of the eighteen provinces are very hot in summer, but it is by no means certain that a back door will be found opening opposite the front one, though this is common in some regions. To this, however, opposed the Chinese intuition, which dislikes regularity of this sort, as unfavorable to good luck, which explains the fact that in so many cities the gates are carefully placed so as not to be opposite. By this means bad spirits are supposed to receive some kind of check. The wooden partition, which does duty as a window, is built into the wall, for security against thieves, and is covered, even in the heat of summer, with a quantity of oiled paper. Doors do not open directly from dwelling houses to the street, and if there are any windows on the street side of a house, they are very small, and very high. Just inside the door is built the adobe support for the cooking-boiler, the latter shaped like a saucer and made very thin in order to economize fuel to the utmost. In all the regions where provision is to be made for heating the room, it is done by conducting a hot smoke from this primitive range, through a complicated set of flues, under the cliban called a kang which serves as a bed, and which is merely an arrangement of adobe bricks. On the end of the kang are piled the bed-quits of the household and whatever trunks or boxes may be able to find room, for this is the only part of the dwelling which is not likely to be damp. As the fire is so near to the outer door, where drafts are strong, as the flues are very likely to get out of order, and there are no chimneys on the roof, worthy of the name, it is that the smoke should be distributed throughout the building with the greatest impartiality, often forming a coating of creosote an inch or more in thickness. Above the cooking-range is fastened the image of the kitchen-god, supposed to be a deity of Chang Kuang, an ancient worthy who was able to live in perfect peace, although five generations simultaneously inhabited the same yard. Even his hundred dogs were so polite as to wait for another, if any one was late at a meal. All this was achieved by means of a chimney, and the reigning emperor was so struck by the unique spectacle of this happy family, that he had images of Chang Kuang put up in all the houses, and after his death he was worshipped. It is much to be regretted that considered as a stimulus to the imitation of this deity (though there is abundant need of Chang Kuang's temper in Chinese homes) is quite inert.

The floor of all common dwellings is merely the earth, not smoothed but merely beaten into level inequalities, which we are assured (in reply to a question why smoothness is not cultivated) is much the best way, as by this means any fluid spilled will run off of itself. In the corners of the dwelling stand, or hang the numerous household articles for which there is no other place. Jars of grain, weaving apparatus, agricultural implements, clumsy beds for weaving cotton, spinning wheels, baskets of all sizes and shapes, one or two benches, and possibly a chair, all seem to occupy such space as is to be had, and for the wretched poor depend all manner of articles, hung up so as to be out of the way,

some of which must be hooked down with a pole, when wanted. The maxim 'a place for everything, and everything in its place' is inappropriate to a Chinese dwelling, where there is very little place for anything. The small yard is in as much confusion as the interior, and for the same reason, dogs, cats, chickens, and babies enjoy a very limited sphere of action, and generally take to the street, which is but an extension of the yards. If the family own animals, some place must be found for them in the yard, though when not in a very secure place, attached to pegs sunk deep in the ground, in front of the owner's dwelling, pigs are kept in a kind of wall, with a brick wall to prevent its coming in, and by climbing a very steep flight of brick stairs they can ascend to a high, their pits, the only two-story abodes found in many regions!

VILLAGE ROADS.—The contracted quarters in which the Chinese live, compel them to do most of their work in the street. Even in those cities which are provided with the narrowest passages, these slender avenues are perpetually choked by the presence of people, and by peripatetic craftsmen, who have no other shop than the street. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker, and hundreds of other workmen as well, have their representatives in perpetual motion, to the infinite impediment of travel. The streets, therefore, are the most of any that can be put, so that travel in the wide streets of Peking, is often as difficult as travel in the narrow alleys of Canton. An 'imperial highway' in China is not one which is kept in order by the Emperor, but rather one which may be used by any one, and which is not called low-ways, for as they are never repaired, they soon become incomparably worse than no road at all.

This is true of the great lines of travel over the empire, we must not expect to find the village roads any better. Each road is simply a forced contribution on the part of the owner of the land, to the general welfare. It is so much available space on which he is compelled to pay taxes, and from which he gets no more good than any one else. Each landowner will therefore take care to make the edge of his land, so that he may not be obliged to furnish more than half the way. But as the pieces of land which he happens to own may be generally of miscellaneous lengths, the road will wind around so as to accommodate the peculiarities of the land. It is often necessary to go a great distance to reach a place not far off. An ordinary road is only wide enough for one vehicle, but as it is often necessary for carts to pass one another, this can only be effected by the use of the question, which the farmer digs deep ditches along his land, resembling gas-mains. Each farmer struggles to protect his own land, and when he drives his own cart, he too becomes a 'trespasser,' thus a state of chronic and intelligible warfare is established, for the accidental plan of setting apart a strip of land, of uniform width, free from taxes and owned by the state, the grade of which shall be definite, is utterly beyond the comprehension of any Chinese. Where land is valuable, and is all private property, roads are not made, but the owner of the land will not repair, and without repair, the roads soon reach a condition beyond the reach of any repairs. Constant travel compresses and hardens the soil, making it lower than the adjacent fields, perpetual attention grinds the soil into dust, which by heavy gales are blown in the form of thick dust on the fields.

In the rainy season, the fields are drained into the road, which at such times is constantly under water. A slight change of level allows the water to escape into some still lower road, and thus a current is set, which becomes a little brook, and then a rushing torrent, constantly wearing out its bed. This process repeated for decades and for centuries, turns the road into a canal, several feet below the level of the fields. It is a proverb that a road a thousand years old, becomes a river, just as a dam built of mud may one day gradually 'sink' into a mother-in-law. By the time the road has sunk to the level of a few feet below the adjacent land, it is liable to be wholly useless as a thoroughfare. It is a canal, but it can neither be navigated nor crossed. In intercourse between villages, the only way along a country 'highway,' is often for weeks together entirely interrupted. The water drained from the land, often carries with it large areas of valuable soil, leaving in its place a yawning chasm. When the water subsides, the owner of the land sallies out to see what has become of his field. To repair these, the owner disdains the canal, but if the owner cannot find that particular earth he can find other earth just as good. Whenever the light soil called loam, or 'loess' is found, it splits with a vertical cleavage, leaving high banks on each side of a rent like a ditch. To repair these, the owner takes the soil which he has dug from a pit excavated by the side of the road, or more probably from the road itself, which may thus in a single season be lowered a foot or more in depth. It is all his land, and why should he not take it? If the public wish to have a road, and do not dig their own, they are to be pitied, for this is the only part of the public good becomes else.

If a road becomes so bad as to necessitate its abandonment, a new one must be opened, or come old one adapted to the altered circumstances. The latter is almost sure to be the case, it is done by conducting a hot smoke from this primitive range, through a complicated set of flues, under the cliban called a kang which serves as a bed, and which is merely an arrangement of adobe bricks. On the end of the kang are piled the bed-quits of the household and whatever trunks or boxes may be able to find room, for this is the only part of the dwelling which is not likely to be damp. As the fire is so near to the outer door, where drafts are strong, as the flues are very likely to get out of order, and there are no chimneys on the roof, worthy of the name, it is that the smoke should be distributed throughout the building with the greatest impartiality, often forming a coating of creosote an inch or more in thickness. Above the cooking-range is fastened the image of the kitchen-god, supposed to be a deity of Chang Kuang, an ancient worthy who was able to live in perfect peace, although five generations simultaneously inhabited the same yard. Even his hundred dogs were so polite as to wait for another, if any one was late at a meal. All this was achieved by means of a chimney, and the reigning emperor was so struck by the unique spectacle of this happy family, that he had images of Chang Kuang put up in all the houses, and after his death he was worshipped. It is much to be regretted that considered as a stimulus to the imitation of this deity (though there is abundant need of Chang Kuang's temper in Chinese homes) is quite inert.

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THE CHARGE AGAINST POLICE SERGEANT DUNCAN.

This case was again before Mr Pollock in the Police Court this morning.

Mr Caldwell, who appeared for the defence, said he did not propose to call any additional evidence, but would proceed to address his Worship for the defence. He submitted in the first place that it had not been proved in evidence that the regulations under which the defendant was charged had received the sanction of the Governor in Council as required by Ordinance 14 of 1887. On this point he quoted the remarks of Chief Justice Phillips in the case of Regina v. Wong On and others, in which the Magistrate's decision was reversed on appeal on this very ground, and with reference to which the Chief Justice said the Court could not see its way to removing the objection that 'the regulations under which the defendants were prosecuted were not proved in evidence.' He simply felt it his duty to take this objection, and he further said that it must be shown that the sanction and approval must have been given since the date of the passing of 14 of 1887, inasmuch as it was by that Ordinance, sections 19 and 20, that this approval and sanction were required.

His Worship said it was quite apparent that the regulations were under that Ordinance and they must have received the sanction of the Governor.

Mr Caldwell said he simply took this technical objection and left it with his Worship to decide.

His Worship—The official copy which has been sent to me by the Government stamp upon it with the signature of General Cameron on the face of it.

Mr Caldwell—The words used by the Chief Justice in the case I have referred to were 'proved in evidence.'

His Worship—I think, looking at the fact that these regulations bear the signature of General Cameron on the face of it, I shall hold they are sufficiently approved.

Mr Caldwell—Your worship takes the mere signature as approval.

His Worship—I think that is clearly so.

Captain Deane (who had taken a seat on the bench)—Mr Caldwell's argument is under section 19, and defendant is charged under section 20, which does not require the Governor's sanction at all.

Mr Caldwell—I think Captain Deane is hardly in order interrupting me.

His Worship—No; and I think it would be better if the Court were to be told that a seat in the body of the Court.

Captain Deane—I am not prosecuting.

His Worship—There is no good saying you are not prosecuting because you are the prosecutor.

Mr Caldwell—Since I am informed the section under which the defendant is charged is section 20 of the Ordinance, I shall submit that it is not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

His Worship—The defendant is charged with disobeying the regulations of the police, and the regulations of the police are not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

His Worship—I think that is so, and that is the difficulty, but I think that it is not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

Mr Caldwell—Then your Worship holds these regulations have been approved. I proceed now to say that any rule so approved by the Governor is binding on all persons in the Government service. Now if your Worship turns to the title page you will see there is an allegation that these rules have been published in the Government Gazette of 2nd Sept. 1887, and I can state as a fact that they have been published in that manner.

His Worship—By the time the defendant is charged with disobeying the regulations of the police, and the regulations of the police are not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

His Worship—I think that is so, and that is the difficulty, but I think that it is not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

Mr Caldwell—My own submission is that there are no words of prohibition and in the absence of such words, the defendant cannot be said to have done something which he was forbidden to do. The effect of this enabling clause is this—any police constable having a warrant may enter the premises without a warrant, but if he enters without a warrant he does not lay himself open to a prosecution for trespass at law by the person suffering from the trespass upon his premises. It cannot make him under any circumstances a breaker of the law so as to make him punishable as an offender.

His Worship—Surely a man has no right as a matter of law to go into a dwelling house from that for which he has a warrant.

Mr Caldwell—I quite admit he has no right, but his doing so does not make him an offender who can be brought before a Magistrate. The only thing it does is to make him subject to an action at the suit of the tenant.

His Worship—It is not misconduct as a police constable according to this ordinance for a police constable to go into a house without a warrant?

Mr Caldwell—I positively assert that you find that merely because a police officer lays himself open to an action at the instance of the tenant that he is not a police officer as a police constable. I have so far argued the matter as if the defendant did 'having a warrant to enter No. 292, enter No. 294 without a warrant, and now you are saying that he is not a police officer as a police constable, but was fully justified in entering No. 294 by authority of a warrant to enter house No. 292. At the first blush this of course sounds impossible, but circumstances alter cases, and in the present instance there are such circumstances as fully justify the defendant in being where he was. Your Worship has it clearly in evidence that No. 292, which was a corner house, had a staircase which merely led from the basement to the first floor and there ceased. Now my argument is that if defendant, as he did, held a warrant in his hand authorizing him to enter No. 292 he was entitled to go to any part of No. 292 he wished to go to, including necessarily the second floor. Not only was he authorized to do so, but

being a police constable having this warrant for the purpose of execution he was bound to go if he could, and he could not refuse to go without being neglectful of his duty. I don't pretend for one moment that he did not go to the top floor of No. 292 by any way which did not lead there naturally and properly. If the staircases of No. 294 did lead and give access to the top floor of No. 292 that was for all purposes whatever a proper way to go to the top floor of No. 292. There was no other means of communication except through the staircases of No. 294 and he was bound to go that way in the execution of his duty. Mr Denison stated clearly that there was no other way of getting to it except by the staircases of No. 294 and across the top floor of the same house, where two openings communicated with the top floor of No. 292. It is not to be supposed in this case that the top floor of No. 292 was to remain unoccupied for ever and a day and if it was to be occupied there must be some means of access to it. If the tenant of this house had not got access to the floor above the staircase of No. 294 his servants would have the same right, and I submit that any police officer had exactly the same right as a way of necessity. My main argument on the part of the defendant is that this staircase was the only means of access, that it was a way of necessity for the tenant thereof, and if that were the case there can't be a doubt about it that the defendant was entitled to go up by that way.

His Worship—You see the question is when the defendant saw there was no way to the top floor of No. 292 except by the staircase of No. 294, he was bound to go back and report and the warrant altered.

Mr Caldwell—That might have been the more expedient thing to do, but we are not here arguing what was most expedient, the question is what did he do that he ought not to do? He did not do that. He submitted in that he did something he was justified in doing. I don't say he did the best thing he could do under the circumstances, but I say he did something he was justified in doing.

His Worship—The defendant is charged with disobeying the regulations of the police, and the regulations of the police are not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

His Worship—I think that is so, and that is the difficulty, but I think that it is not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

Mr Caldwell—My own submission is that there are no words of prohibition and in the absence of such words, the defendant cannot be said to have done something which he was forbidden to do. The effect of this enabling clause is this—any police constable having a warrant may enter the premises without a warrant, but if he enters without a warrant he does not lay himself open to a prosecution for trespass at law by the person suffering from the trespass upon his premises. It cannot make him under any circumstances a breaker of the law so as to make him punishable as an offender.

His Worship—Surely a man has no right as a matter of law to go into a dwelling house from that for which he has a warrant.

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His Worship—It is not misconduct as a police constable according to this ordinance for a police constable to go into a house without a warrant?

Mr Caldwell—I positively assert that you find that merely because a police officer lays himself open to an action at the instance of the tenant that he is not a police officer as a police constable. I have so far argued the matter as if the defendant did 'having a warrant to enter No. 292, enter No. 294 without a warrant, and now you are saying that he is not a police officer as a police constable, but was fully justified in entering No. 294 by authority of a warrant to enter house No. 292. At the first blush this of course sounds impossible, but circumstances alter cases, and in the present instance there are such circumstances as fully justify the defendant in being where he was. Your Worship has it clearly in evidence that No. 292, which was a corner house, had a staircase which merely led from the basement to the first floor and there ceased. Now my argument is that if defendant, as he did, held a warrant in his hand authorizing him to enter No. 292 he was entitled to go to any part of No. 292 he wished to go to, including necessarily the second floor. Not only was he authorized to do so, but

being a police constable having this warrant for the purpose of execution he was bound to go if he could, and he could not refuse to go without being neglectful of his duty. I don't pretend for one moment that he did not go to the top floor of No. 292 by any way which did not lead there naturally and properly. If the staircases of No. 294 did lead and give access to the top floor of No. 292 that was for all purposes whatever a proper way to go to the top floor of No. 292. There was no other means of communication except through the staircases of No. 294 and he was bound to go that way in the execution of his duty. Mr Denison stated clearly that there was no other way of getting to it except by the staircases of No. 294 and across the top floor of the same house, where two openings communicated with the top floor of No. 292. It is not to be supposed in this case that the top floor of No. 292 was to remain unoccupied for ever and a day and if it was to be occupied there must be some means of access to it. If the tenant of this house had not got access to the floor above the staircase of No. 294 his servants would have the same right, and I submit that any police officer had exactly the same right as a way of necessity. My main argument on the part of the defendant is that this staircase was the only means of access, that it was a way of necessity for the tenant thereof, and if that were the case there can't be a doubt about it that the defendant was entitled to go up by that way.

His Worship—You see the question is when the defendant saw there was no way to the top floor of No. 292 except by the staircase of No. 294, he was bound to go back and report and the warrant altered.

Mr Caldwell—That might have been the more expedient thing to do, but we are not here arguing what was most expedient, the question is what did he do that he ought not to do? He did not do that. He submitted in that he did something he was justified in doing. I don't say he did the best thing he could do under the circumstances, but I say he did something he was justified in doing.

His Worship—The defendant is charged with disobeying the regulations of the police, and the regulations of the police are not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

His Worship—I think that is so, and that is the difficulty, but I think that it is not a departmental order within the meaning of that section, that the section under which defendant is charged does not come within the meaning of a departmental order.

SUPREME COURT.

IN CRIMINAL SESSIONS.
(Before Hon. James Russell, Acting Chief Justice.)
Thursday, Sept. 27.

CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD AN INSURANCE COMPANY.

The monthly Criminal Sessions were resumed to-day when the trial of Chung Chi, Choo Kai, Tong Yin and Li Yui, for a charge of conspiracy to defraud the Straits Fire Insurance Company, Limited, by means of arson, was proceeded with.

Mr Francis, Q.C., instructed by Mr Stokes, appeared for the prosecution; and Mr Robinson, instructed by Mr Hastings of Messrs Wotton and Dixon's office, for the defence. The jury were—Messrs J. Olson, J. Muloon, A. Johnston, F. J. V. Jones, A. Young, H. A. J. Witte and E. del Aguila.

The evidence for the prosecution was concluded about noon to-day.

Mr Robinson in opening the defence said that if the defendants had the advantage of being represented by two counsel, it might have been expedient to make different defenses for the three folk and the master of the ship. He, however, did not mean to take this course. It was a peculiar way in which the prosecution had been brought, and it compelled the defence to fight an insurance case and an arson case at the same time. His line was to accept the position and to fight it. The three folk were not conspirators, and the real question on which the jury would decide the matter was—had there been arson or not. If there had been no arson the jury would find the prisoners not guilty. This was an accidental fire; the shopmen did not know the origin of it and therefore could not explain it, because when it began they were asleep.

The story of the Hwang Shin boy, as he was called, was so full of discrepancies that the jury could not believe it, and he was the only witness against the prisoners on the charge of arson.

Evidence for the defence was then called. Hon. H. E. Woodhouse, Police Magistrate, was first examined as to a portion of his notes of the evidence which he had collected. He stated that the deletion was made by him.

Mr Robinson asked whether the deletion was made after or before the witness signed the deposition.

His Lordship would not allow the question.

Mr Robinson objected to the ruling. His Lordship said he would note the objection and would reserve the point, but at present he was satisfied with the Magistrate's statement that the deletion was made by him.

Mr Francis suggested that some information might be elicited from Mr Woodhouse as to the manner in which he took his depositions. Personally, he should like to know.

The hearing was adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10.30.

CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS.

FLEXIBLE INFLEXIBILITY.

It has been already remarked that the first knowledge which we acquire of the Chinese, is derived from the servants. Unconsciously to themselves, and not always

